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NSC BRIEFING

21 September 1960

CONGO

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2. President Kasavubu's office announced that no agreement existed with Lumumba; but Lumumba at press conference on same day showed reporters agreement allegedly signed by Kasavubu. It strengthened position of chief of state and called for cooperation with the UN. No doubt agreement actually exists.
- C. Assassination plots against Colonel Mobutu failed on 18 and 19 September, others likely on part of Lumumba's extremist supporters.
- D. Lumumba retains ability establish dissident government in Stanleyville if he fails on national scene. We believe he would demand and probably get some support from USSR, provided some African states were favorable to Lumumba.
- E. Lumumba also reported seeking means to reach UN via Accra.
- II. USSR has suffered blow to its prestige and to its pose as disinterested champion of newly independent African countries.
 - A. Soviet ability to affect outcome local Congo situation also greatly diminished by evacuation of Soviet and Czech diplomats. Moscow probably hopes, however, that situation will take sudden turn and again open door to Soviet influence.

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3. All eleven IL-14 transports--including one given to Lumumba--have left Congo for USSR with "technicians," but speed of departure makes it unlikely that all bloc technicians actually evacuated. (Soviets hurriedly painted

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with paint still wet.)

3. Soviet diplomats actually evacuated only as far as Adra. Moscow press has painted evacuation move as "temporary recall" due to encroachment by "self-appointed authorities" on "legal government."

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- III. Colonel Mobutu apparently continues to have the upper hand in the Leopoldville area, but the extent of his support remains unclear.
- A. Has apparent control of troops in capital area, but tribal ties still determine troop loyalties.
 - B. On 29 September Mobutu announced that Bomboko, the foreign minister, had been appointed to head a "technical commission" which is to run the Congo until the end of the year.
 1. Has indicated he will turn over government to Kasavubu-Ileo faction by end of October; in the interim, commission will take orders from Kasavubu.
 - C. Cooperative with UN command: General Kettani and Moroccan officers appear to be principal advisers.
 - D. Position may be undermined if efforts to achieve a reconciliation between Kasavubu and Lumumba should be successful.

IV. Tribal fighting in other parts of Congo still threatens.

A. In Katanga province, cease-fire along Kivu frontier has at least temporarily removed danger of invasion but Baluba tribal outbreak in central region poses serious threat to Tshombé government.

1. President Tshombé on 19 September stated that Katanga will not join in any political associations with the Congo--even under a non-Lumumba government--but is interested merely in an economic union.

B. Kasai fighting continues in low key with UN-sponsored cease-fire generally in effect but situation liable to rapid deterioration at any time.

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